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# *MEMORIAL*

OF

# JOHN UNDERWOOD GILLER,

PAST MASTER

## PHŒNIX LODGE, No. 130,

F. & A. M.

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By Order of

# PHŒNIX LODGE, No. 130,

## F. & A. M.

*At the Stated Meeting, February 20, 1878.*

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# In Memoriam.

BRETHREN:—The solemn thought that "*there is an appointed time on earth to all men*," is more deeply impressed on our minds, as one by one, a brother drops from his accustomed place among us, and we are led to exclaim with Job, that "*our days are "swifter than a post; they flee away, they see no good. "They are passed away as the swift ships; as the eagle "that hasteth to his prey.*"

Again are we called to mourn the death of a beloved associate, yet we "*sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.*" On January 2, 1878, it pleased Him who doeth all things well, to call from labor to rest, our esteemed brother, Past Master John U. Giller, and we desire to place on record, a brief tribute of respect to his memory.

Brother John Underwood Giller, was born June 8, 1810, in West-Whiteland Township, Chester County, Pennsylvania, near what is now Oakland Station, on

the Pennsylvania Rail Road. His early boyhood was passed in a store at Columbia, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania.

In 1826, he removed to Philadelphia, and was employed in dry goods stores until 1831, when the firm of Mayberry, Giller & Watkin, was established, and continued for ten years. He then entered the house of Odenheimer & Tennent, and remained with them until 1857, when they retired from business. In the following year, he became connected with the house of Barcroft & Co., and at the time of his death, had charge of the credit department of their large business.

As a merchant he was distinguished for great ability and large experience in business, and enjoyed an enviable reputation for commercial sagacity, sound judgment and strict integrity. With a clear mind, quickly perceptive, a strong memory, and extensive self culture, and knowledge of men and books, he possessed rare social qualities, which endeared him to all with whom he was brought in contact. In physical constitution he enjoyed unusual powers of labor and endurance, until the affliction of his later years came upon him. This great trial, (partial blindness,) he bore with calmness and resignation, feeling sure that

though under the rod, he was in the hands of a merciful and gracious Father.

He was married in 1840, and his widow and five children survive him. As a husband and father, he was most justly and ardently revered and loved. For over forty years he was a faithful member and attendant of St. Peter's Protestant Episcopal Church, Third and Pine streets.

He was the author of a volume of Poems, and a frequent contributor to the periodicals of the day, being a man of positive convictions, a ready reasoner, and forcible writer.

Brother GILLER took a deep interest in all that tended to elevate and improve his fellow-men; entering heartily and intelligently into every form of work which promised fair results for good, conscientiously discharging every duty devolving upon him. Among the enterprises which engaged his active sympathy and support, may be mentioned the "Moyamensing Literary Institute," organized in 1852, of which he was one of the founders, and for twenty-four years its President, devoting much of his time to its care and management, and the large results of its efforts in doing good to the young of the southern section of our City, are largely due to his sound judgment and wise counsels.

At times he was prominent in public affairs, and served as a member of Common Councils in 1854, taking an active and conspicuous part in the legislation made necessary by the Act of Consolidation. In every position of trust confided to him, he faithfully and honorably discharged the duties thereof as a man and a citizen.

Brother JOHN U. GILLER'S Masonic Life began at the age of forty-two. He was initiated in Phœnix Lodge, No. 130, F. & A. M., February 16, 1853; Crafted April 20, 1853, and Raised June 7, 1853. Was elected Junior Warden, December, 1855; Senior Warden, December, 1856; Worshipful Master, December, 1857, and duly installed the same night. With a perfect knowledge of our ritual and the ability to explain the lessons taught by our ceremonies, he proved himself to be fully competent to govern and instruct the craft, in a most acceptable and gratifying manner. During the last two months of Brother GILLER'S official year, important business compelled him to be absent from the City. After his return, at the stated meeting of the Lodge, February 16, 1859, he delivered an eloquent address "ON THE MODES OF WORK," to the members and visiting brethren, among whom was Past Grand Master Josiah Randall, who at the conclusion of

Brother GILLER's address, made some very appropriate and highly complimentary remarks.

Brother GILLER's eloquent tongue and ready pen have frequently been called into use to illustrate the private worth and Masonic character of our departed brethren, and many of his contributions have been published in pamphlet form, at the request of the Lodge, the most striking being his just and beautiful tribute to the memory of our lamented brother, Past Master Joseph S. Riley.

On two separate occasions, by special request, Brother GILLER exemplified and illustrated the Third, or Master's Degree, in a manner rarely equaled in any jurisdiction, shewing himself to be "a workman that needeth not to be ashamed," but rightly divining the hidden mysteries of our Institution, and clearly expressing them in an eloquent and impressive manner. This was especially so, on the last occasion in June, 1877, when Brother GILLER surpassed all his previous efforts, to the great pleasure and profit of those who were fortunate enough to be present. At that time conscious of his failing strength, and no doubt impressed with the solemn lesson taught in that degree, he must have felt a premonition of the "great change" about to take place in his own case, as he remarked to

the writer of this, that he "felt it was the last time he should do the work of the Lodge." And so it proved to be his last work among us. Let the remembrance thereof be ever precious.

As a member of the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania, he took an active interest in its affairs, serving acceptably and creditably on the Committee of Correspondence; the Trustees of the Masonic Loan, and the Hall Committee of the Chestnut Street Temple.

His attachment for, and devotion to, our Institution, were of no ordinary kind. His whole heart and energy, from the time of his initiation until his death, were devoted to the interests of the fraternity, and his happiest moments seemed to be when he was surrounded by its mysteries, and at work in its Temple. Time, thought and labor were cheerfully spent in his efforts to promote the interests of the craft, and extend its charity, with a zeal and efficiency seldom equaled and rarely excelled. A workman distinguished alike for the "beauty and excellence of his work," and for the Masonic virtues exemplified in his daily walk and conversation:—

*"For he was worthy; he was indeed a brother."*